

General “Enclosure” Requirements for Residential Swimming Pools

Barrier:

- Must be at least 48” above grade measured outside face of barrier.
- Maximum 2” opening at bottom of barrier to grade.
- Maximum 4” opening in barrier.
- Maximum mesh size for chain link fence 2-1/4” or provide slats fastened at the top or bottom.
- Maximum opening for lattice fence 1-3/4”.
- Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is less than 45” the spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 1-3/4”.
- Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is 45” or more the spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 4”.

Gates:

- Must accommodate a locking device.
- Shall open away from pool.
- Shall be self-closing.
- Shall be self-latching.
- Where the latching device is located on the outside of the barrier it shall be located not less than 54” above grade.
- Where the latching device is located on the poolside of the barrier it shall be located at least 3” below the top of the gate.
- The gate and barrier shall have no openings greater than 1/2” within 18” of the release mechanism.

Doors with direct access from the house:

- All doors with direct access to the pool shall be equipped with an alarm.

Alarms:

- Shall sound when the door and/or screen are opened.
- The alarm shall sound continuously for 30 seconds.
- Shall be heard throughout the house.
- Shall reset automatically.
- Shall be equipped with manual means to deactivate the device for a single operation. Deactivation shall not last for more than 15 seconds. The deactivation switch shall be located at least 54” above the floor.
- Other means of protection such as self-closing/latching devices shall be acceptable with the approval of the Building Official.

Aboveground pools:

- The pool may be used, as a barrier provided the top of the pool is at least 48” above grade.
- The ladder or steps shall be capable of being secured, locked or removed to prevent access; or provide a barrier meeting the requirements outlined above.

This document is provided to list the general requirements of the code.

The actual code text is applicable.

20003 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code

Referenced: 2003 International Residential Code (Appendix G)